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|---|--|---|--------------------------|
|  | Proposed trail access |  | Proposed view point |
|  | SDG&E access roads |  | Proposed multi-use trail |
|  | Potential access roads to private property |  | Proposed hike/bike trail |
|  | Vernal Pool Areas* | | Private property |

Note: Fencing and signage will be installed as necessary

Note: Public trails will not be located on private land (pending land acquisition, MOU and/or trail easement)

Note: Lands not shown as private, within the boundaries of Del Mar Mesa Preserve, are in public ownership or under easement to a public agency

**Source: City of San Diego, revised in part by RECON (2001/2002)

FIGURE 9-3
Overview of Proposed Trail System
on Del Mar Mesa Preserve

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second viewpoint is located northeast of “The Preserve” housing development on the southern most spur off the main road.

Many of the existing unauthorized paths within the Preserve will remain closed and will be re-vegetated with passive and/or active methods to restore natural processes interrupted and/or damaged by unauthorized use. In addition, restrictions based on the land purchase requirements will be enforced, e.g. lands purchased as mitigation or with restricted state bond funds. Permanent closure and re-vegetation of paths shown may be approved by Mayoral action, and will be supported with substantive documentation for closure including but not limited to:

- Unsafe or unsustainable trails
- Trails initiating opportunities for illegal activity
- Trails contributing to resource impacts (i.e. erosion, biological, etc.)
- New environmental concerns

Proposed changes or additions to the trail alignments included in this document will be evaluated based on the MSCP, additional applicable regulations, if any, and the acquisition of appropriate permits. All changes must be authorized through an amendment to this plan and the Del Mar Mesa Specific Plan, or through concurrence of City, CDFG and USFWS staff.

9.3.3 Connections to Other Trail Systems

The proposed trail systems on Carmel Mountain Preserve and Del Mar Mesa Preserve were designed to be part of the regional trail system, connecting to other open space trails, specifically, Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (LPCP), Torrey Pines State Reserve, Black Mountain Open Space Park and the San Diego Trans-County Trail (see Figure 9-2a).

The two Preserves are connected via trails along the following surface streets: Rancho Toyon Place, Little McGonigle Ranch Road and Del Mar Mesa Road.

9.3.3.1 Carmel Mountain

Connection to Torrey Pines State Reserve is made via the CVREP trail on the north. Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve can be reached from the southeast corner of the Preserve past Ocean Air Elementary via Carmel Mountain Road and Wagon Wheel Crossing within LPCP. Connection to the San Diego Trans-County Trail is made by taking the trail along the surface streets mentioned above and entering Del Mar Mesa at the existing south access road toward Park Village Road to Kit Carson’s Crossing within LPCP.

9.3.3.2 Del Mar Mesa

Future connection to Torrey Pines State Reserve will be made from the northwest corner of Del Mar Mesa through Carmel Valley via the CVREP trail. The connection to Black Mountain Open Space Park will be made from the north through McGonigle Canyon and Carmel Valley. The existing connection to LPCP from the south is via the existing access road. There is an additional connection to LPCP by way of the Shaw-Lorenz development down the "Side Hill Trail" just west of Sycamore Crossing. There are two proposed connections to LPCP 1) from the eastern side of Del Mar Mesa through Darkwood Canyon and 2) from the southwest corner of Del Mar Mesa connecting to "Gobbles/Queens" trail north of the waterfall.

9.3.3.3 San Diego Trans County Trail

The San Diego Trans County Trail is a 114-mile route that stretches from Torrey Pines to the Anza Borrego desert (Figure 9-4). The trail corridor extends through several administrative jurisdictions and consists of existing and proposed trails on public lands and within the public right-of-way. Nearly 70 percent of the route exists on federal, state, county and city lands. In 1998, the expedition known as the "Spines to Pines" expedition traversed the route from the desert to the coast (San Diego Natural History Museum 2001).

The San Diego Trans County Trail is a branch of the 7,700-mile Sea-to-Sea Trail, a system of interconnected trails crisscrossing the lower 48 states. On this trail system a person will be able to ride a bicycle, ride a horse, or walk to every large or medium size town in the country. Trails will lead directly or indirectly to the nation's major trails, including the Pacific Crest Trail that extends from Mexico to Canada. The Pacific Crest Trail runs north-south through the mountains of eastern San Diego County.

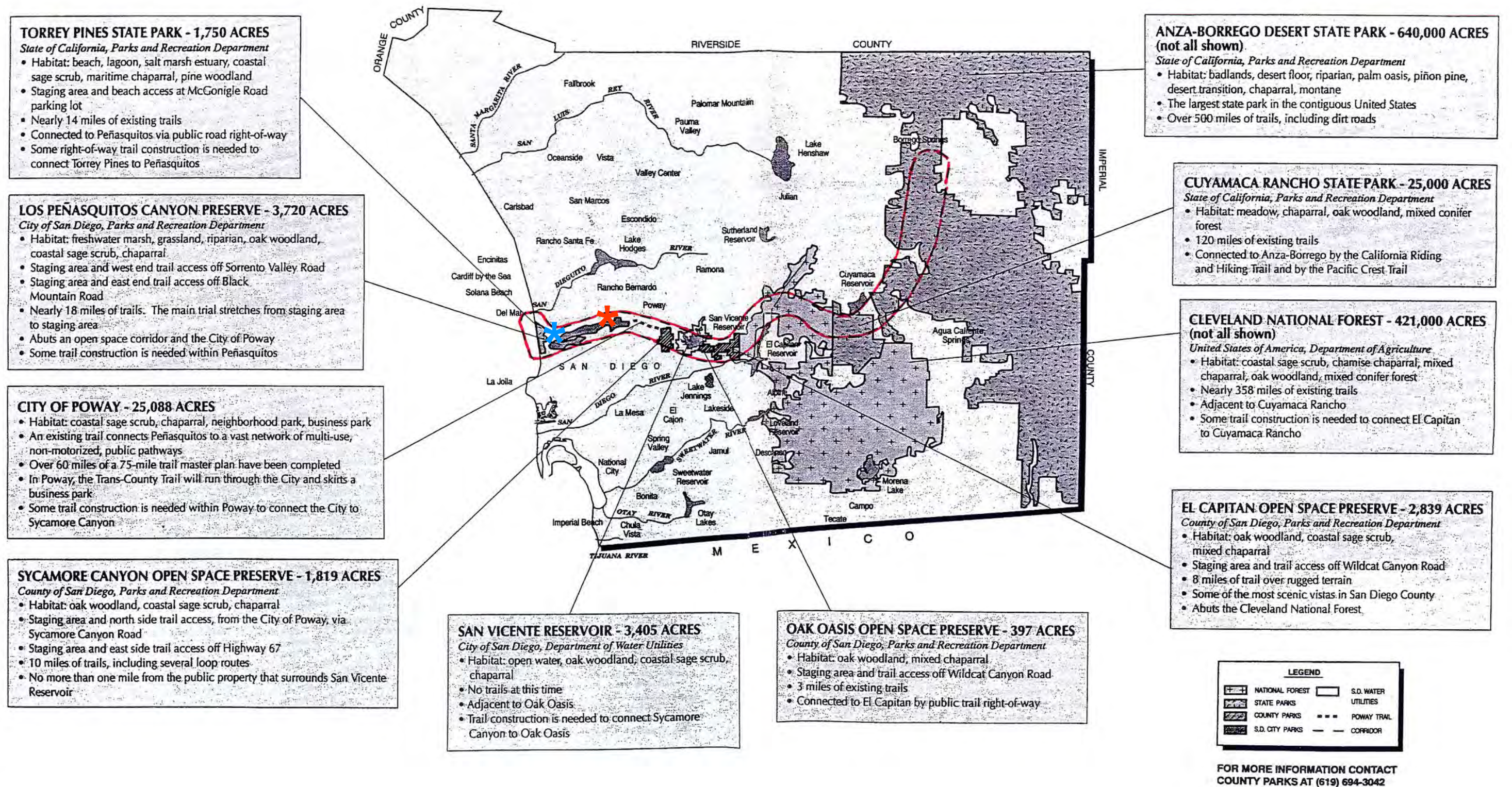
The San Diego Trans County Trail is sometimes called the San Diego Sea-to-Sea Trail, connecting the Pacific Ocean to the Salton Sea, a distance of 140 miles.

9.3.4 Trail Uses

A variety of non-motorized uses will be allowed on the trails of the Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Preserves. The primary uses are on-foot (hiking, walking, jogging, and running), mountain biking, and horseback riding. Figure 9-1a shows the difference trail uses, signage, fencing and lookouts.

Fencing will protect and prevent degradation of sensitive resources where trails encounter them. When brought on the Preserves, domestic animals will be leashed or otherwise constrained at all times and will be cleaned-up after by the owner or animal walker.

Encouraging multi-use activities on designated trails, rather than creating different trails for different activities, is important to maintain the biological integrity of the habitats. Trails in natural areas can significantly alter the habitat surrounding them. The opening of canopies by



- * Carmel Mountain Preserve
- * Del Mar Mesa Preserve

FIGURE 9-4
Trans-County Trail System

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vegetation removal, soil compaction, and the modification of existing drainage patterns by removal of upper soil horizons result in the modification of micro-topography that directly influences micro-climate and are direct consequences of trail construction (Cole as cited in Dehring and Mazotti 1997). In addition, off-trail use adjacent to marked trails results in increased instances of vegetation trampling and development of unauthorized volunteer trails. Trampling causes structural damage to plants, which can lead to modified species composition and reduced cover and height. Trampling also affects trailside vegetation by changing soil conditions through compaction of soil particles and disruption of soil surface horizons. These changes in soil conditions often result in decreased nutrient, oxygen, and moisture levels, and increase the soils' resistance to root penetration (Dehring and Mazotti 1997). Short-cut trails that link two main trails opens up a wider area of habitat to disturbance, increases habitat fragmentation within the landscape, and deteriorates natural vegetation communities by creating favorable conditions for exotic species.

9.3.4.1 Hiking, Walking, and Running

The Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Preserves are both in the vicinity of housing developments. Once the development projects are completed, the Carmel Mountain Preserve will have residential housing on three sides. The southern boundary of the Del Mar Mesa Preserve links with the Los Peñasquitos Open Space Preserve and will attract hikers coming from that Preserve. Both the Carmel Mountain and the Del Mar Mesa Preserves are already being used by people hiking and walking their pets.

9.3.4.2 Horseback Riding

To protect sensitive biological resources while maintaining equestrian use within the Preserves, sensitive resources will be fenced, and the trails modified to allow the co-existence of sensitive resources and equestrian use. Sections 1.5.8 of the MSCP requires that the placement of equestrian use areas for both the Del Mar Mesa and Carmel Mountain Preserves minimize equestrian contact with wetland areas, including the vernal pool areas, and other highly sensitive biological areas (City of San Diego 1997).

Equestrian use on trails can contribute to the deterioration trails by loosening the soil, trampling the vegetation, and encouraging avoidance behavior in native animals (Dehring and Mazotti 1997). By remaining on designated trails, the horseback riding impacts in the surrounding habitat will be avoided.

9.3.4.3 Mountain Biking

Those sensitive resources located near potentially impactful activities, such as mountain biking and other uses, will be protected by fencing.

9.3.4.4 Access for Private Landowners

Access to private property on Del Mar Mesa can be obtained through existing SDG&E access roads. Additional environmental review will be required for access and development of private lands.

9.3.5 Trail Management

9.3.5.1 Trail Implementation

a. City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan Guidelines

The following requirements are taken from the City of San Diego's MSCP Subarea Plan (Section 1.5.2, 1997) in regards to general management directives for trails:

- Provide sufficient signage to clearly identify public access to the MHPA. Barriers such as vegetation, rocks/boulders or fencing may be necessary to protect highly sensitive areas. Use appropriate type of barrier based on location, setting and use. For example, use chain link or cattle wire to direct wildlife movement, and natural rocks/boulders or split rail fencing to direct public access away from sensitive areas. Lands acquired through mitigation may preclude public access in order to satisfy mitigation requirements.
- Locate trails, view overlook, and staging areas in the least sensitive areas of the MHPA. Locate trails along the edges of urban land uses adjacent to the MHPA, or the seam between land uses (e.g. agriculture/habitat), and follow existing dirt roads as much as possible rather than entering habitat or wildlife movement areas. Avoid locating trails between two different habitat types (ecotones) for longer than necessary due to the typically heightened resource sensitivity in those locations.
- In general, avoid paving trails unless management and monitoring evidence shows otherwise. Clearly demarcated and monitor trails for degradation and off-trail access and use. Provide trail repair/maintenance as needed. Undertake measures to counter the effects of trail erosion including the use of stone or wood crossjoints, edge plantings of native grasses, and mulching of the trail.
- Minimize trail widths to reduce impacts to critical resources. For the most part, do not locate trails wider than four feet in core areas or wildlife corridors. Exceptions are made when appropriate and necessary, to safely accommodate multiple uses or disabled access. Provide trail fences or other barriers at strategic locations when protection of sensitive resources is required. The existing fence design is shown in Photograph 9-2, a fence on the Carmel Mountain Preserve.
- Limit the extent and location of equestrian trails to the less sensitive areas of the MHPA. Locate staging areas for equestrian uses at a sufficient distance (e.g. 300–500 feet) from